

REMARKS

Claims 1, 2, 9 and 10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Boiocchi (USPN 5,695,578) and further in view of Kojima (JP 58167203). Applicant traverses this rejection because Boiocchi and Kojima, taken alone or in combination, do not disclose or suggest that a belt cover ply extends more than 10 mm further than the at least two belt plies, in the tire axial direction.

The examiner cites Kojima only to disclose a rubber belt cord coating with a loss factor of 0.10 or less. However, Kojima is silent regarding a belt cover ply. The examiner relies on Boiocchi to disclose this feature.

Boiocchi discloses an auxiliary belt strip 9 which is disposed radially outward of first and second belt strips 7 and 8. The auxiliary belt strip 9 extends over the entire axial width of underlying belt strip 7 and 8, and symmetrically projects from the axially opposite edges of the first belt strip 7 by an amount of 5 to 10 mm. Thus, it is clear that Kojima and Boiocchi taken alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest a belt cover ply that extends axially more than 10 mm beyond a belt ply. Moreover, as disclosed in the technical background of the present specification, when the extension portions of a conventional tire extend more than 10 mm in the axial direction, the amount of heat generated in the shoulder portions due to repeated deformation increases, causing a loss of energy and deteriorating rolling resistance.

In contrast, the present specification discloses that a tire has a decreased $\tan \delta$ (i.e., $\tan \delta$ is less than or equal to 0.1 at a temperature of 60°C) and that the radial direction

length h between the edges of the extension portion and the edges of the first belt ply is relatively small (i.e., the ratio of the radial direction length h and a tire section height SH is expressed by $h/SH \leq 1.5/100$). These features moderate the heat generated in the shoulder portions during rolling of the tire. Thus, as shown in Table 1 of the present specification, a tire according to the present invention has improved rolling resistance and uniformity, due in part to the length of the extension portions. For all these reasons, applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1, 2, 9 and 10.

Claims 3, 5, 11 and 13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Boiocchi and Kojima and further in view of Mochida (JP 02074403) and Yamamoto (JP 06092108). Claims 3 and 5 depend from claim 1, and claims 11 and 13 depend from claim 9. Because these claims incorporate the limitations of their respective independent claims, and because Mochida and Yamamoto fail to overcome the identified deficiencies of the rejections of independent claims 1 and 9, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 4 and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Boiocchi, Kojima, Mochida and Yamamoto, and further in view of Motomura (USPN 5,215,612). Claims 4 and 12 depend from independent claims 1 and 9 respectively, and therefore include all the features of their respective independent claims, plus additional features. Accordingly, applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of claims 4 and 12 be withdrawn in light of the above remarks directed to claims 1 and 9, and because Motomura does not remedy deficiencies identified with respect to the rejection of the independent

claims.

Claims 1, 6, 8-10, 14 and 16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Serra (WO 2002/26878) in view of Boiocchi and Kojima. Applicant traverses this rejection because Serra, Boiocchi and Kojima taken alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest a belt cover ply having extension portions that extend more than 10 mm axially beyond the edges of one belt plies.

Serra discloses a tire including two belt strips containing a plurality of reinforcing cords oriented at a predetermined angle and a reinforcing layer placed on the radially outermost belt strip incorporating a plurality of reinforcing cords extending substantially in the circumferential direction of the tire. However, Serra is silent regarding an axial width of the reinforcing layer. Moreover, as discussed above, Kojima is silent regarding any belt cover ply, and Boiocchi discloses only that an auxiliary belt strip extends between 5 and 10 mm in the axial direction beyond the underlying belt strips. Accordingly, Serra, Boiocchi and Kojima taken alone or in combination, do not disclose a belt cover ply having extension portions that extend more than 10 mm beyond the edges of the wider of the belt plies in the tire axial direction. For these reasons, applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of this rejection.

Claims 7 and 15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Serra, Boiocchi and Kojima, and further in view of Kan (USPN 4,444,236) and Haneda (JP 07257116). Claims 7 ultimately depends from claim 1, and claim 15 ultimately depends from claim 9. Because each of these claims incorporates the limitations of its respective

independent claim, and because Kan and Haneda fail to overcome the identified deficiencies of the rejections of independent claims 1 and 9, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

For all of the above reasons, applicant submits that this application is in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested. The examiner should call applicant's attorney if an interview would expedite prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

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